

2 July 1974

MEMORANDUM FOR: All Members of OCI

SUBJECT : The Daily, Editors and Other Matters

The Daily has been with us for just over five months and, after sounding out its readers, the DCI has decided to make it a permanent part of our repertory.

The birth and early infancy were not easy. We were all dealing with a brand new thing, and, not surprisingly, a number of difficulties arose. A series of memorandums, directed at overcoming these difficulties, have been distributed. This memorandum, the next to the last in the series, deals with the following:

- Analysis vs. reporting.
- Space.
- Editors.
- Headlines.
- The Daily vs. the Times and Post.

A Place for Analysis

The Daily is a current intelligence publication in the form of a small newspaper; it is the Director's personal publication for a select group of top foreign affairs executives.

He wants it to contain both the latest information and the best analysis that CIA can produce on any given day. This means that it will cover important new developments, important new intelligence, and important new analysis. In many cases, a Daily story will contain elements

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of all three; i.e., it will report what has happened, say what we have learned about the event through intelligence channels, and analyze what it all means.

In any given issue, the balance of the three elements will be controlled by the material that is available. The balance is not regulated by a fixed standard. The writers (analysts) and editors of the Daily determine the daily blend.

Among the questions sent out with the Daily questionnaire was one asking whether the paper was managing a satisfactory balance between fact and analysis. The responses suggest that most of our readers find the balance about right. A few said they would prefer more analysis, and a surprising number said they would prefer more facts.

Everyone who writes for the Daily should rest assured that its staff welcomes, encourages, and needs analysis. The Daily will find room for reasoned analysis whenever it is available. It has probably published a greater number of long analytical articles than any other OCI daily, past or present. Features provide great scope for analysis, and the Daily has averaged better than one a day.

Space, Black and White

One of the changes the Daily has brought to the Office concerns our old, CIB-bred ideas about thresholds in national intelligence. The old concepts led to very tight selection criteria and to what we, at least, felt were lean bulletins. While they contained all the really important national intelligence, they did leave a number of recipients feeling undernourished.

The Daily hears a different drummer. It sets out to provide a fuller cut of daily intelligence. Normally, the Daily contains everything that is in the PDB, practically everything that is in the Bulletin, the top slice from the divisions' Staff Notes, feature articles, and the findings of our in-depth analytical work drawn from NIEs, NIAMs, as well as interagency and other memorandums.

The Daily has transferred part of the selection process to the office of the recipient. The idea was not fully grasped by all recipients right off. A number of them, used to having

their reading material culled for them, had been, in effect, trained to read everything set before them. So the idea of skimming headlines and choosing which stories to read in full, while not new, did seem to them a little foreign in an intelligence publication.

They have had five months of practice; we believe that the idea is better accepted now and that this acceptance will grow. Only a small number of the respondents to our questionnaire complained about getting too much. The DCI and others appreciate the depth that the Daily gives.

On the other side of the coin, the experience so far has been that OCI has had enough quality material to fill up the Daily's four pages, and we should generally be able to produce four pages of copy of interest for the Daily's varied audience. The real test, of course, will come with the summer doldrums, when we may well be left with more blank space or, perhaps, even a two-page edition.

Still, there is competition for space in the Daily. On any given day, any one story competes with every other story for space and placement. The keenest competition is between feature articles and regular news-analysis stories. All the soundings we have taken, including the questionnaire, testify to the popularity of the feature articles.

Surprising it may be, but the Daily's elite audience is far from the least receptive and least worthwhile for this type of extended treatment. Many of them regard the features as the outstanding element of the Daily, so the space given features is well used.

When we commit space for a feature, we reduce the amount left for analytical and reportorial pieces of a shorter nature. This may mean that on occasion items that are lower on the priority scale and/or less time-sensitive will be shunted to a later issue.

Another aspect of the space problem may be described as the "other discipline syndrome." In OCI this takes the form of a conviction that stories on economic, military, or scientific subjects, most of which are written outside OCI, are a lesser breed of cat.

This is simply not so. One man's meat is another's marginalia. Our list of recipients contains a number of worthy

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officials who are intensely interested in each of these subjects. For instance, 17 of our 55 readers work for the Department of Defense and can be expected to be much interested in Soviet hardware. And, in one issue, the following items attracted the attention of Secretary of the Treasury Simon, one of our key readers:

- Soviets Seek Oil Office in Houston
- Balance of Payment Problems in Central America
- Perez Aware of Obligation to US
- Iran Aid to Syria, Egypt
- The NIE on Vietnam

The Editorial Nettle

Editors, like death and taxes, will be with us always and will attract the same measure of affection. The Daily by its nature requires the attention of more editors than any other publication OCI has ever produced. This fact has magnified an old OCI bugbear -- levels of editorial review.

In the beginning the Daily was not all that it could be. In the intervening months, it has come a good distance and has gained a good measure of reader acceptance. While perhaps not in all respects a well-edited paper, its language and layout, and, indeed, its substantive content, have been and are a credit to all concerned. Today, it is a good publication, which means that the levels of editorial review are about right. A story that is well thought out and well written will sail through with only minor changes.

Some characteristics of the editing on the Daily are common to other OCI publications, some are quite different. The main differences are: The Daily processes a far larger amount of copy each day, and the greater part of the processing takes place after the normal working day. The Daily also introduces headlines and layout, along with the peculiar problems of finite space.

It takes time for the Daily staff to process the volume of material that goes into an issue of the Daily; just keeping track of it is a job by itself. The late nature of much of

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the work on the Daily means that, compared to the Bulletin and the Weekly, the analyst has lost a measure of control over his product. He cannot, for example, take part in writing a headline for his story unless he is prepared to stay around half the night. He may not see the final edited version of his story, especially if it trickled into the Daily offices late in the working day.

The Daily editors accept the idea that insofar as possible authors should be able to review the edited versions of stories they have written. In normal circumstances, the Daily staff will make available for review before 4:30 any copy that is received by 2:30. The staff invites the author to stop by and see the edited version of copy received later. Indeed, the editors will edit your piece for you if they haven't gotten to it when you call.

In addition, the night editors will not as a rule amend an edited and approved text, except when they have to shorten it to fit. They have plenty of other things to do.

They keep track of the drafts, seeing that each gets to the proper place at the proper time; they prepare dummies of the layout for the four pages, making final decisions on the placement of each story; they contract for, and accept or reject, graphics, including photographs; they compose and fit headlines; they oversee the paste-up of the paper, passing on all last-minute changes; and, they see the paper through the print shop and out of the building by 6:00 a.m.

They are, at the same time, responsible for making late changes to the PDB and for keeping the PDB, the Daily, and the Bulletin in at least loose harmony.

Textual editing will frequently seem capricious to the author, and some of it will even seem brutal. Around here, the editing may be either or both, but an editor, if he is any good, will always have a reason for the changes he makes. If you question why your prose was changed, by all means check with the editor.

Decisions on which stories to run, and when and where to run them, are neither the birthright of the analyst nor the sole property of the editor. Such decisions are the product of a series of interactions involving analyst, branch chief, production officer, division chief, the Daily staff, and, in a number of cases, the office director, the DDI or the DCI.

The Daily is the publication of the last named, and he can always use it, when he chooses, to convey a message to the Daily's audience; generally, however, he leaves it to us.

We would like to encourage a free and easy exchange of views among everyone involved in the Daily, especially between author and editor. The Daily staff invites critiques of any aspect of the paper even if the critic had no hand in the matter being criticized. The staff gets regular critiques from a shifting group of old hands about the building and finds the critiques quite useful. They helped mould the Daily as it is today and will help us to improve it in the future.

Headlines and Headaches

Headlines are a key part of the newspaper. When the Daily began, OCI had little experience with headlines and it was feared they would be our biggest headache.

By and large, this has not turned out to be the case. Inevitably, some headlines have failed to convey the main point of the story they covered, and a larger number have over-emphasized one point at the expense of another. Still others have failed to reproduce the careful nuance of the text. The larger number seem to have fallen into the category of acceptable if not laudable.

As all who have tried headline writing know, it is an exacting job. A good headline writer is hard to find, and the commercial newspapers employ experts who do little else.

By now, everyone should understand that a headline in the Daily cannot be written until the editor has decided on which page a story will appear and has dummied up that page. Only then does the headline writer have the information he needs--the size of type to be used; whether the headline will have one, two, or three lines; and, whether it will cover one, two, or more columns.

The headline writer can then begin to think about the best way to convey the message of the story and to find the sometimes peculiar words that will make his headline fit. The headline will almost always be drawn from the lead paragraph or paragraphs. So if the story is put together right the headline should not be far off.

The Daily staff will try hard to make the headlines as compatible and reflective of the story as is possible given the limitations of the system. Division representatives can help. If there are tricky bits to a story, the division representative should be informed so that he can advise the headline writer on the points to be made and the pitfalls to be avoided.

The Commercial Press

The Daily is an intelligence publication, and we emphasize this point by citing our privileged sources as early in our stories as we can. The Daily makes use of vast resources to serve an audience that is tiny but important. It is not aimed, as are The Washington Post and The New York Times, at a mass market. That said, it should be recognized that in the eyes of our audience the Daily will at times be measured against the Post and the Times.

This does not mean that we have to cover every foreign affairs story they do simply to make a reportorial record. It does mean that on important stories we try to be more current than either the Post or Times; where possible we will provide more complete coverage, and we will always provide that added dimension supplied by our intelligence sources and analytic insights.

If we use our unique resources well and write promptly, the Daily will compare well with the commercial press on foreign affairs.

Other Matters

The Daily uses photographs and gets them from a number of sources. The first source is the analyst's own files. Then there are reams and reams of photographs, usually mug shots, in CRS. CRS files are easy to exploit during the day. At night and on weekends, we deal with the CRS duty officer, whose telephone number is available in the Operations Center. NPIC is another rich source, including lots of ground photography.

25X1A In addition, the Daily has an arrangement with CRS officers [REDACTED] We send them a list of likely subjects right after the morning planning session. The officers, who are in touch with [REDACTED] buy 25X1A

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against our list. Their purchases are sent to Washington by bus, usually arriving in the Daily offices about 10:00 p.m. We are looking into quicker ways of getting [REDACTED] here.

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The summary, which appears on page one of the Daily, was introduced because several of our key readers, Secretary Schlesinger especially, thought it would be useful. Not everyone agreed, but returns from the questionnaire suggest the summary has been sufficiently useful to enough readers to be considered a fixture.

We want the readers of the Daily to respect it for integrity and to appreciate that everything in it is as accurate and insightful as we can make it. When we are wrong, we admit it; we call a mistake a mistake. When an event we predict fails to come off, we acknowledge the miss. We do not, on the other hand, go around patting ourselves on the back when we are right.

[REDACTED]

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Acting Director of Current Intelligence

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